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5. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 4, further comprising a first transport mechanism for transporting the information discs between the eject position, the play position and the loading position, and a second transport mechanism for transport of the information discs from the loading position into the stacking positions of the stacking unit, the first transport mechanism being adapted to move the information discs in the loading plane and the second transport mechanism being adapted to move the information discs in a stacking direction oriented vertically with respect to the loading plane.

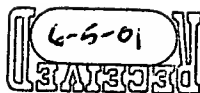
6. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 5, wherein the first transport mechanism comprises at least a first and a second guide for the disc edge of the information disc, which guide is grooved and is movable in the loading plane, the second guide comprising at least one rotationally drivable first transport wheel.

7. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 6, wherein:
the first guide is a passive supporting guide,
there is provided a third guide comprising a second transport wheel,
there is provided a passive supporting guide as a fourth guide,
the first, the second, the third and the fourth guide comprise pivotal arms which are supported at one end and which are pivotable in the loading plane,
the first, the second, the third and the fourth guide are pre-loaded towards the curve-shaped loading path,
the first transport wheel is essentially adapted to move the information discs between the eject position and a transfer position and the second transport wheel is essentially adapted to move the information discs from the transfer position into the loading position.

8. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein the first and the third guide are mounted on a common pivot.

9. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 7, wherein a read/write unit is movably supported on a chassis plate of the apparatus.

10. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the read/write unit comprises a base plate and a laser mounting plate, the base plate and the laser mounting plate are coupled by means of dampers, the base plate is slidably mounted on the chassis plate, and the laser mounting plate carries a clamping device for clamping the information disc in the play position and an optical unit for reading information stored on the information disc.



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62 11. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein the read/write unit is movable into the play position in the vertical direction.

12. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 9, wherein in the play position the first, second, third and fourth guides are pivoted away from the disc edge of the information disc, and the pivoting away of the guides is controlled by the base plate of the read write unit or a sliding plate.

D² 13. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 1, wherein the stacking unit comprises at least two holder compartments for holding one information disc each,

the holder compartments are coupled to at least one threaded spindle and are movable into a vertical direction by rotation of the spindles,

there is provided an upper stacking zone and a lower stacking zone in the stacking unit for stacking the holder compartments,

the loading position is in a central zone between the upper and the lower stacking zone,

one of the holder compartments is each time movable into the loading position by rotation of the spindles, and the transport means are adapted to move the information disc from the holder compartment, which is in the loading position, into the play position and into the eject position.

14. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein in the axial direction of the spindles the central zone has spacing zones at both sides of the loading position, which spacing zones define an axial spacing between the holder compartment in its loading position and the axially adjacent holder compartments in their stacking positions.

15. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein the average screwthread pitch of the spindles in the loading position is smaller than the average screwthread pitch in the upper and the lower stacking zone.

16. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein the screwthread pitch of the spindles in the loading position is essentially zero.

17. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein the average screwthread pitch in the spacing zones is greater than the average screwthread pitch in the upper and the lower stacking zone.

18. (twice amended) The apparatus of Claim 13, wherein there is provided a lower and an upper guide pin for guiding the information discs into the holder compartments of the stacking